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of what they consider a grand outlet of our empire. Should any circumstance, therefore, unfortunately occur to disturb the present harmony of the two nations, this ill-adjusted question, which now lies dormant, may suddenly start up into one of belligerent import, and Astoria become the watchword in a contest for dominion on the shores of the Pacific." — Vol. II. pp. 261, 262.

ART. XII. — 1. *An Oration delivered on the Anniversary of the New England Society, Charleston, S. C., December 22d, 1835; in Commemoration of the Landing of the Pilgrims upon the Rock of Plymouth, December 22d, 1620.* By JOSHUA BARKER WHITRIDGE, A. M., M. D. Published at the request of the Society. Charleston; E. J. Van Brunt. 1836. 8vo. pp. 62.

2. *Memoirs of a Nullifier. Written by Himself.* By a Native of the South. Columbia, S. C. Printed and published at the Telescope Office. 1832. 12mo. pp. 110.

3. *An Address delivered before the Pilgrim Society of Plymouth, December 22d, 1835.* By HON. PELEG SPRAGUE. Boston; Light & Stearns. 1836. 8vo. pp. 32.

WHEN left to our own imaginations, we simpletons of New England fancy that we find very sufficient reason to be satisfied with our history, our condition, and one another. More than almost any other people, we are entitled to call our history our own. Almost as much as any other, we are a homogeneous race; scarcely the Chinese more so. With the exception of a few Huguenot families who came over at the close of the seventeenth century, and who, from religious sympathy, and other causes, were easily grafted on the primeval vine, we are all descendants of English, established here within thirty years from the earliest settlement. We have not so much as a city, which is a *colluvies* of foreign and domestic elements. The interior feeds the seaports. In the principal of these are a few Irish, mostly arrived since the war, but not sufficient in number to be of any account in estimating the character of the population; and of other

emigrants, or descendants of emigrants, not belonging to the original stock, we have almost literally none.

This history of our soil and society, which is at the same time the history of our own progenitors, we should be utterly unwilling (with all respect for the subjects of other histories) to exchange for any other which we read. Had our fathers come hither to secure a condition of more affluence or more ease, there would have been no fault to find with their enterprise. Had they come, because they had not succeeded in getting an honest living at home, this would have been no discreditable motive ; and other communities, founded in such a beginning, have risen afterwards to great respectability. But they came for a much better reason than either. They betook themselves to this “outside of the world,” to secure to themselves and theirs the liberty of thought and worship. Is there any nobler impulse, under which men can make struggles and sacrifices, and does history tell of another society, which may boast of a similar origin ?

The founders of the colonies of Plymouth and Massachusetts differed in some particulars ; the former being for the most part of the class of yeomen and artisans, while among the latter were many men of fortune, some belonging to noble families, and numbers educated in all the scholarship and refinements of the time. But, essentially, they were the same sort of men. They had been adherents at home of the same cause, and they came across the water under the same impulse. Arrived here, though independent of each other, both proceeded to build up a society in substantially the same manner ; for both went to work in the way which their Anglo-Saxon instincts prompted. They did not pitch their first tent in this chilly land of promise, till they had set up the safeguards of popular freedom. They had hardly looked to the necessities of life, when they provided for the necessities of learning and religion. Taking prudent care of the beginning, they looked steadily and hopefully on to the end. It is past a doubt, that the Massachusetts colonists contemplated, from the first, the establishment of an independent commonwealth. With this view they insisted on bringing their charter over with them, and neither they, nor their descendants, ever abandoned the design, till it was consummated by the war of the Revolution.

The progress of their institutions was the developement of

the capacities of an intelligent, industrious, religious, heroic race. They won upon the aborigines by their fair and liberal dealing, rather than through the resources of their superior civilization. "I think I can clearly say," said Governor Winslow, of Plymouth, in 1676, "that before these present troubles broke out, the English did not possess one foot of land in this colony, but what was obtained by honest purchase of the Indian proprietors." Always watchful of the great interest, and prodigal of every other, now they are seen opposing an undismayed front to the aggressions of the parent country, and now beggaring their treasury, and lavishing their best blood, in the boldest expeditions against the common enemy, the French. Meanwhile, nothing diverts them, for a moment, from the pursuit, at home, of all measures for building up a strong and prosperous commonwealth. Not only is a competent education provided for every child, at the public cost, but his guardians are compelled, under a penalty, to accept for him the advantage thus afforded. The higher places of education are fostered with a liberal patronage. The town corporations, covering with their several jurisdictions the whole territory, are charged with whatever may be done, by municipal regulation, for the security and comfort of a neighbourhood, and are strictly held to their responsibility by the higher powers. The ministers of the law are made independent of official dictation and of popular caprice; and religion, by a sufficient but cautious provision for the maintenance of its institutions, is aided to enforce its sanctions on the public mind.

Under such auspices, a state of things has grown up, which a man must be querulous to complain of. Dwelling "among our own people" of these six States, we find them a very good people to dwell with. That Massachusetts, for instance, is not a decidedly ineligible home, might be partly conjectured from the fact, that it numbers eighty-seven inhabitants to the square mile, while the Ancient Dominion, blacks included, counts but twenty-five, and the most populous State out of New England, New York, gives to the same space a census of forty-six, little more than half that of the Bay State. With no natural wealth for exportation, except what consists in granite and ice, — "absolutely nothing but rocks and ice," as of late a distinguished southern statesman emphatically testified, — we yet make shift to keep the wolf, Want, from the door. We take good care

of those who cannot take care of themselves ; but no one, among us, so he has but health, needs to fall into poverty. Most things that may be honestly done for a living, are done by one or another of us. We fish, we manufacture, we till ("credat Judæus !"), we trade, and we study. Our *swapping* transactions sometimes employ no little capital, and often carry us a long way from home. The commodore of a Russian exploring expedition lately fell into a fog, just as he had come to flatter himself that he had about reached the world's end, and written his name for immortality with the Vancouvers and Cooks. When it cleared away, he found himself in a fleet of Yankee craft, the commander of one of which offered to pilot him to an excellent roadstead hard by, the old familiar haven of himself and his compeers. Our colleges are in that condition, that, in addition to the granite and ice above commemorated, we find ourselves able to send into other States a few professional men, who, we learn, find a market, and every year, about commencement time, an assortment of teachers in the different ranks, from intructers in the common schools, to presidents and professors in the higher institutions. Each having enough to do of his own, people have the less reason to interfere with one another, except in the way of mutual kind offices, or joint action for public objects. Each being able to depend on himself, there is no motive for servility, and arrogance is awed by the certainty of a prompt and effective rebuke. Men know whom they are dealing with, as they cannot know in one of those recent communities, where a population is collected, not amalgamated ; and so escape the tendency to that mutual distrust, which if not a virtue, is a necessity, where there is any strange companionship.

Wherever there is a combination of universal competence and moderate information, occasional wealth and habits of intellectual activity, it might be anticipated with confidence that there would grow up a taste for the elegances of art and literature, and all the refinements of the social state, even if the original stock were less propitious to such fruits than was that of New England. How we actually stand in these respects, it is clearly not for ourselves to judge ; nor by any means do we covet to be the subjects of favorable comparisons with our fellow-citizens of other sections of the country. Still it is certain, that comparisons of this kind which are actually made

by strangers who visit us, to tell what they find, are not such as to distress our vanity. Captain Hall does not mince the matter. "Since coming to Boston," says he, "we have been more struck, and confessed ourselves to be so, with the degree of taste and luxury in all we saw, both in the external appearance of the houses, and in the good sense and good manners within, than with any thing we had before met in the United States." Mrs. Butler and M. de Tocqueville are scarcely less complimentary; and Captain Hamilton, well as he learned his lesson in some other respects, was fain to own that he found in Boston a circle of society, distinguished by "much taste for literature, much liberality of sentiment, a good deal of accomplishment, and a greater amount, perhaps, both of practical and speculative knowledge, than the population of any other mercantile city could supply."

All this looks very well on paper; but still there is reason to fear, that the character of the New England population does not stand altogether well with the multitude of their brethren. How any existing prejudice of the kind arose, it might not be difficult to conjecture; but it would be an invidious inquiry, and we decline it. That, having arisen, it has been perpetuated, is a fact that requires no explanation. An error capable of producing a political effect bears a charmed life. If such things are tolerably well nursed, — and this they are very likely to be, — so notoriously are they beyond the power of mere contradiction, that report says, a political tactician in Pennsylvania, in the canvass of 1828, observing what havoc was making among the votes of the foreign population by the story that the lady of Mr. Adams was a daughter of George III., advised not to waste breath in a denial of the statement, but to work a traverse by reporting that General Jackson had wedded two daughters of that monarch. But however originated or kept alive, the prevalence of the feeling in question, to some unhappy extent, is, we suppose, not to be denied. We learned as much from Captain Hamilton's own book. "The whole Union," says he, "is full of stories of Jonathan's cunning frauds." That traveller's swallow is quick and capacious, and we would rather not rely on him exclusively for such a statement; still its breadth and confidence attach to it a certain interest. Mr. Sprague, author of one of the addresses of which we have prefixed the title, (the late distinguished Senator from Maine,) knows better whereof he affirms, and he

goes so far as to say ; "It has become so common with our brethren of other States, to talk of New England cupidity and fraud, that it is taken by the ignorant abroad to be characteristic of our community." Dr. Whitridge is a native of New England, long resident in the capital of South Carolina. His high station in society, accorded to him by the cordial respect of all to whom he is known, affords him the best opportunities for acquaintance with the state of prevailing sentiment. He too professes his endeavour to have been, in his address delivered on the anniversary of the disembarkation at Plymouth, "to rescue a section of our common country from unmerited reproach ;" and specifies the nature of animadversions which have been made, as of the following flattering character.

"Yankees, it has been said, are like a rope of sand ; that they have no sympathy for one another ; that there is no adhesion among them, either at home or abroad ; that they are mean and selfish in their disposition, sly, cunning, apt to overreach ; in short, dishonest whenever they can get any thing by it ; and that their motto virtually is, if not the avowed principle of action, 'Every man for himself, and God for us all.' " — p. 23.

Here is a pleasant accumulation of compliments to ring on an honest people's ear. One cannot but hope at first, that there is some mistake in the representation, and that single petulant expressions of accidentally prejudiced persons have been taken, by individuals conscious of their own character and jealous for that of their birth-place, for indications of a prevailing sentiment. But we believe it will not do to lay any such flattering unction to our souls. Respecting the authorship of the "Memoirs of a Nullifier," the second work of which we have prefixed the title, we have no knowledge nor ground for suspicion. We have never heard it ascribed to any one but an aged gentleman, who, we are sure from internal evidence, did not write it. The author also professes to be a native of the South, which the individual referred to is not ; and that this is not a mere *nom de guerre*, appears from a few southern provincialisms, occurring in what is generally an extremely good style.* The work is "printed and pub-

* Such as *would*, for *should*, in the following sentences ; "I found that I would miss the planet by about fifteen inches," and "I hoped that some time or other I would arrive at a stopping-place I saw ;" and the use of *dear* so as to rhyme with *fair*, and *tear* with *repair*, in a copy of verses on page 36, indicating a well-known sectional peculiarity of pronunciation.

lished at the Office of the Telegraph," a journal of well-known ability and influence, edited at the seat of government of South Carolina. That the author has not made his observations on New England men at home, is to be inferred from his small success in representing the peculiarities of their speech. The caricature is not absolutely a bad one, but not nearly as good as a man of so much shrewdness, had he travelled into New England, might be expected to produce. For instance, "I reckon," is not Yankee, but Virginian calology. "Stranger," as a form of address to a person whose name one does not know, belongs not to the Eastern, but to the Western dialect. *Get along*, when used at all, is used for, "to proceed," and never in the sense intended to be attached to it in the following sentence; "I calculate I'll make a pretty tolerble considerable speck on what I've got along." *Mighty*, we have supposed from Colonel Crockett's works, to be a Tennessean, certainly it is not a New England superlative. And "doos you," wherever else it may prevail, we will answer for it, was never heard between the Hudson and the St. Croix.

But wherever and however his studies into the New England character were prosecuted, the result is such as the following specimen may indicate. The work is in form an autobiography. The writer and hero, having occasion to visit the lower regions, falls in, on the way thither, with "the ghost of a Yankee pedlar, who was journeying to the other world with his cart of tin ware and other notions." This personage directly joined him, "and showed himself to be fully as impudent and inquisitive as if he were still alive." The passage of the party over the Styx is delayed half an hour, while the pedlar higgles with Charon for a reduction of the ferriage from twelve cents and a half, the usual fee, to ten cents; and again, by his plunging into the river after a "cooter," from one of whose bones, when caught, he proceeds to make, with his penknife, an article, which he offers for sale, as "an elegant tortoise-shell comb." Arrived before the judgment-seat of Rhadamanthus, they found him "seated with a great number of large account books before him."

"'Virgil Hoskins is your name, is it?' said he. 'Here it is, among the H's, page 49,358. Ah, Virgil! there's a terribly long account against you. Let's see a few of the charges.' (Reads.)

"VIRGIL HOSKINS, DR.

"June 27, 18—, To selling in the course of one peddling expedition, 497,368 wooden *nutmegs*, 281,532 Spanish *cigars* made of oak leaves, and 647 wooden *clocks*.

"What do you say to that charge, Hoskins?

"*Hoskins*. Why, that was counted in our place about the greatest peddlin trip that ever was made over the Potomac.

"*Rhadamanthus reads*: June 29, 18—, To stealing an old grindstone, smearing it over with butter, and then selling it as a cheese.

"*Hoskins, in great surprise*. Jimminny! surely you wouldn't punish a man for that, would you?

"*Rhadamanthus reads*: December 13, 1780, To making a counterfeit dollar of pewter, when you were six years old, and cheating your own father with it.

"*Hoskins*. Daddy was *mighty* glad when he found it out. He said it showed I had a *genus*.

"*Rhadamanthus reads*: July 2, 18—, To taking a worn-out pair of shoes, which you found in the road, and selling them to a pious old lady, as being actually the shoes of Saint Paul.

"*Hoskins, with exultation*: I made four dollars and twelve and a half cents by that.

"*Rhadamanthus reads*: — July 2, 18—, To taking an empty old watch-case, putting a live cricket into it, and then selling it as a patent lever in full motion.

"*Hoskins*. He, he, he,— that was one of the 'cutest tricks I ever played in all my life.

"*Rhadamanthus*. It would occupy me a week, Hoskins, to go through all the charges against you. These few are sufficient. I really am getting entirely out of patience with New England, for it gives me more trouble than all the rest of the world put together. You are sentenced to be thrown into a lake of boiling molasses, where nearly all your countrymen already are, with that same old grindstone tied to your neck, and to remain there for ever." — pp. 42, 43.

Here is the ideal of the New England character, as exhibited in different aspects in different parts of the story. We have no intention to represent the volume as a malignant libel upon the character of this portion of the country. It is not so. It is simply an easy *jeu d'esprit*, thrown off in the wantonness of "a few long days of summer leisure," which the author says he "knew not how to employ better." Whatever there is of bilious temperament apparent on his part, is vented as much on other characters produced in the nar-

rative, as on those of Eastern origin ; and if there is any thing to choose between the Nullifier himself, his Southern friend, and his Southern mistress, on the one hand, and the Yankees Hooker, Phipps, and Hoskins on the other, it is not very clearly to the disadvantage of the latter triad. Could we regard the volume as a mere ebullition of personal or party spleen, we should look on it much less seriously in its relation to the question now before us. As it is, the writer only meant, for effect's sake, to draw the Yankee character with poetical truth, as it was conceived by those for whom he was writing ; and accordingly the delineation shows what those readers were prepared to bear and to expect in the premises. He is no fool, so as to be writing at a venture, and his dedication of the work "to his Excellency James Hamilton, Jr., Governor of South Carolina, whose chivalrous character has procured him the appropriate appellation of the 'Bayard of the South,' " forbids the supposition that he supposed himself to be without sympathy in the highest quarters.

Still the writing is anonymous ; and, in a matter of such import, it is natural to like to have names for vouchers. These, it might be supposed, would be difficult to get at, from the natural unwillingness of right-minded men to bring sweeping charges against a whole community, and, especially, from the impossibility (except under circumstances of the highest excitement) of such charges being made in the hearing of those whom they arraign. Yet it cannot be denied, that proof even of this kind is continually presenting itself, to that degree that he who should undertake to collect it in any one department, would find his undertaking to be no sinecure. Let us content ourselves, as to authorities, with the case of the wooden nutmegs, which appear in the van of the pungent extract given above, as well as, with racy repetition, in other parts of the work. Though, man and boy, we have lived in New England nearly half a century, without having seen, or credibly heard, of an actually existing specimen of this fabric, we are obliged to suppose that in some places it is held to be the great result of New England industry ; — not salted fish, nor cotton shirtings, nor brown paper spelling-books more so. For instance ; a recent number of the "United States Telegraph" is before us, in which we find the Rev. R. C. Postell, of Orangeburg, in South Carolina, (a well-informed and well-intentioned individual, we doubt not, as becomes his profession,) treating

“the art of making nutmegs and bacon out of wood,” as notoriously practised among our “country people.” Mr. Senator Preston, (“*cujus ab ore melle dulcior fluit oratio*”) lately came to New England, and left it, being a truly candid and generous man, agreeably impressed with some things which he saw. On his return, he had occasion to address a public meeting, convened to make arrangements for the Charleston and Cincinnati Rail-road, and he took the opportunity to do manly justice to some qualities and effects which had come under his observation. He addressed no rabble, but an audience of gentlemen of property and influence, as the occasion which brought them together implies; but still it seems even the flavoured honey of his tongue would have cloyed, unless spiced with the ever-ready wooden nutmegs. We cannot deny ourselves the gratification of setting down his remarks. The taste of their general tenor was his own. The incident we have hinted at was but a deference to the taste, while it was a distinct recognition of the opinions, of his hearers. We extract from the “Columbia Telescope.”

“Mr. Preston, in his speech concerning the Rail-road, on Monday last, drew a very striking contrast between the difference of character of the people of the Northern and of the Southern parts of the Union, and the consequently opposite condition of the countries that they inhabit.

“He said that no Southern man can journey (as he had lately done) through the Northern States, and witness the prosperity, the industry, the public spirit, which they exhibit, the sedulous cultivation of all those arts by which life is rendered comfortable and respectable, without feelings of deep sadness and shame, as he remembers his own neglected and desolate home. There, no dwelling is to be seen abandoned, no farm uncultivated, no man idle, no waterfall, even, unemployed. Every person and every thing performs a part towards the grand result, and the whole land is covered with fertile fields, with manufactories, and canals, and rail-roads, and public edifices, and towns and cities. Along the route of the great New York canal, (that glorious monument of the glorious memory of De Witt Clinton,) a canal, a rail-road, and a turnpike, are to be seen in the width of perhaps a hundred yards, each of them crowded with travel, or overflowing with commerce. Throughout their course, lands, that before their construction would scarcely command five dollars the acre, now sell for fifty, seventy-five, or a hundred. Passing along it, you see no space of three miles without a town or village, and you are never out of the sound of a church bell.

“ We of the South are mistaken in the character of these people, when we think of them only as pedlars in horn flints and bark nutmegs. Their energy and enterprise are directed to all objects, great and small, within their reach. At the fall of a scanty rivulet, they set up their little manufactory of wooden buttons or combs; they plant a barren hill-side with broom corn, and make it into brooms at the bottom, — and on its top they erect a wind-mill. Thus, at a single spot, you may see the air, the earth, and the water, all working for them. But, at the same time, the ocean is whitened to its extremities with the sails of their ships, and the land is covered with their works of art and usefulness.

“ Massachusetts is perhaps the most flourishing of the Northern States. Yet, of natural productions, she exports but two articles — granite and ice. Absolutely nothing but *rock* and *ice*! Every thing else of her commerce, from which she derives so much, is artificial, — the work of her own hands.

“ All this is done, in a region with a bleak climate and sterile soil, by the energy and intelligence of the people. Each man knows that the public good is his individual advantage. The number of rail-roads, and other modes of expeditious intercommunication, knits the whole country into a closely-compacted mass, through which the productions of commerce and of the press, the comforts of life, and the means of knowledge, are universally diffused; while the close intercourse of travel and business makes all men neighbours, and promotes a common interest and common sympathy. In a community thus connected, a single flash of thought pervades the whole land, almost as rapidly as thought itself can fly. The population becomes, as it were, a single set of muscles, animated by one heart, and directed by a common sensorium.

“ How different the condition of things in the South!” &c.

We hope that Mr. Preston’s predecessor in the United States’ Senate had the opportunity of listening to these remarks. They would not fail to enlarge his conceptions of the New England mind. At the time of his famous debate with Mr. Webster, the relation of his party to the federal councils was critical, and he tried hard to do the civil thing by New-England, though the course of his argument led him to no measured treatment of its leaders. But the kindest intentions could carry him no further than to an acknowledgment of its “steady habits and hardy virtues,” while, speaking of other portions of the country, his fervor could luxuriate in such epithets as “the gallant West,” “great and magnanimous Virginia,” and the “noble disinterestedness, ardent love of

country, exalted virtue, and pure and holy devotion to liberty of the people of the Southern States.”

The delusion we have referred to, there is too much reason to fear, has been conveyed, with the course of population, across the mountains. The most unambiguous expression of its existence there, which we recollect to have lately observed, in a respectable quarter, occurred on the presentation of the navy appropriation bill, at the last session of Congress. On that occasion, standing in his place among the representatives of the people, Mr. Hardin, of Kentucky, in debate with Mr. Cushing, of Massachusetts, is represented in the reports of the discussion, to have

“hit at cod fishery, wooden nutmegs, and tin peddling, and said that the gentleman from Massachusetts came from a section of country, where the people could see a dollar with the naked eye, as far as he could through a telescope.”

Mr. Hardin is a man of unimpeached and unimpeachable veracity. His reputation for blunt frankness is implied in the very *soubriquet* by which he is best known. We are persuaded that the saving of his right hand would be no bribe to him to affirm what he did not believe. We are bound therefore to understand, that this is actually his opinion, concerning the population to which his remarks apply. It is his opinion, because he has lived where the doctrine was inculcated, and because, being guileless, he is unsuspecting, and easily practised upon. In ascribing his unfortunate error to credulity, we do no injustice to his understanding. He is not only an honest man, but an able. But all men are gullible. Not more true is it, that all men are mortal ; and just as certainly as this gentleman and his neighbours believe what they do of New England and its nutmegs, they might with the proper appliances, be brought to believe that the moon is made of green cheese. Let them take care that some Yankee does not, before long, beguile their simplicity into that error.

We do not undertake to refute the doctrine of the nutmegs. There are no resources, in logic, to prove a negative. Accordingly, in reason and in law, the burden of proof is thrown on the other side, and we have never yet seen an indictment with specifications, to put the party accused on his defence. Dishonest men, we suppose, are the growth of every soil. We have no difficulty in allowing that such may have been

born in New England ; and on the other hand, if no fraudulent bargain was ever made by a native of Kentucky or South Carolina, it is time that those States asserted for themselves a place in the eye of the world and of history, to which no other community, as far as we know, has ever yet ventured to lay claim. That dishonest men, of New England birth, should have practised their arts more freely abroad than at home, is also a very credible thing. The class of rovers is generally found to embrace a portion of those who were in no good esteem at their starting-place, and bad men never conduct themselves so ill as in places where they are but transient sojourners. Also, when a wrong has been committed by such foul birds of passage, there is always danger that it may be laid at some door where it ought not to lie ; for the injured has small opportunity to examine the baptismal record of him whom he finds occasion to revile ; and where, for instance, as in North Carolina, peddling is carried on by native citizens, if a fraud occurs, the sufferer, under his double stimulus of personal indignation and sectional patriotism, is extremely likely to impute to New England, what is, in fact, chargeable to the next county to that where he is complaining.

We will plead, then, to the nutmegs, whenever some case shall be presented ; saying nothing further about them meanwhile, than that the general charge of dishonest transactions would really have seemed to us antecedently more probable, if some other form of dishonesty had been alleged instead of this. For we know of no tree and no art existing in New-England, from and by which a tolerable counterfeit of the fruit nutmeg could be produced. It is neither one of the geometrical figures, nor a combination of two or more. We apprehend that the lathe which could shape its likeness is yet to be invented ; and though the Yankee penknife, like the Yankee axe, is a potent tool, it would for this use require an amount of time, which could not profitably be afforded. Further, we suppose that, all over the world, people, who buy nutmegs, buy them for their aromatic property ; and of this we never heard of any substance, which would afford an imitation, capable of cheating the most unpractised olfactory organ. Our friends do us more than justice in one view, while in another they do us less. Wise as they give us credit for being, we are not equal to work like this.

Of specific charges of mal-practice against our population,

we suppose that to which we have referred to be decidedly the most prominent, and to rest on the highest authority. There are others of a more general nature, referred to in the publications from which we have quoted, on two or three of which we would bestow a little attention.

An impression has gone abroad, that the inhabitants of New England are an excessively *frugal* people. It ought better to be known why, when, and how far they are frugal. It is a point of honor with a New England man to maintain his family, and pay his debts. Is he any the worse for that? and how shall he do it, living, as he does, in a country of harsh climate and penurious soil? He cannot do it, except by persevering industry, and a methodical and prudent management of his affairs. If he is to be honest, he must be careful. Accordingly it is his custom, in pecuniary transactions, to avoid waste, and to stand for his rights. When he buys, he has first compared his wants with his means, and he does not intentionally give more for a thing than it is worth to him. What he has to sell, he has worked hard for, with a view to put it to some good use; and when he parts with it, he expects to get its value. This, it must be owned, is, for a general rule, the habit of the country, and not merely the custom of the poorest. A load of wood is driven to your door by a person, who perhaps might turn out, on inquiry, to be a *selectman* of his town, possibly even a representative in the General Court. When you have paid your fifteen or twenty dollars for your fuel, he expects you to pay him further the little piece of silver, which it cost him to have the wood surveyed. Why should he not? It is his right. He paid the money to the licensed measurer, for your greater security. There is no meanness in his demanding it back; there would be meanness in your grudging to refund it. There is no reason whatever, why he should give it to you. There is reason why he should keep it, to increase what he means to give in some other quarter. And if you follow him home the same day, it is very likely that you find him visiting some sick or aged neighbour's house, with a present, (the fruit of his expedition,) or going into town-meeting to vote for or urge some liberal appropriation, a full share of which is to come out of his pocket, for schools, roads, or alms-houses.

We should like, for the curiosity's sake, to see some system of ethics, which should show it to be otherwise than a duty,

to spare that one may have to spend and give. We should be gratified to see a set argument to prove, what in some quarters is so constantly taken for granted, that it is praiseworthy to be so thoughtless and easy in one's money affairs, as to have nothing to bestow when some good object requires an appropriation. The New England notion of the honorableness and the uses of economy is different. Practical illustrations of it, as it is actually entertained, might be had in any plenty for the seeking. Let us see how things go on, in this respect, in Boston. We have no more convenient way of getting at a general idea of them, than by making an abridgment from the Appendix to President Quincy's Address on the second centennial anniversary of the settlement of that city.

President Quincy gives a list in specific sums of, 1. "Amounts received from the liberality of the citizens of Boston towards objects of a moral, religious, or literary character, chiefly within the last thirty years," making a total of \$1,155,986; of which \$354,400 were given to the Massachusetts Hospital; \$222,696 to Harvard College; \$79,582 to the Female Orphan Asylum, and \$75,000 to the Athenæum. 2. Contributions for the relief of sufferers in five northern towns by fire, amounting to \$67,462. 3. "Moneys raised within the time specified by various contributions, or by donations of individuals, for the patronizing of distinguished merit, or for the relief of men eminent for their public services (testamentary bequests not included,) \$108,400. 4. "Amounts collected for objects of general charity, or for the promotion of literary, moral, or religious purposes, by or under the influence of various religious societies in the metropolis (not including the particular annual objects of expenditure of each society,) \$469,425. The sum total of particulars thus collected is \$1,801,273. Mr. Quincy adds, that

"The object on this occasion has not been completeness, which was known to be impracticable, but as near an approximation to it as was possible. How far short the statement in this item is from the real amount collected, may be gathered from this fact, that information was requested for the amount collected within the last thirty years; yet more than half the sum stated in this item arose from collections made *within the last ten years*. As a further illustration, it may not be improper to state, that, within the last twelve years *five* citizens of Boston have deceased, whose bequests for objects exclusively of public

interest or benevolence, when united, amount to a sum exceeding *three hundred thousand dollars*, and that one of these during the last twenty years of his life, is known to have given away towards similar objects, a sum equal to *ten thousand dollars* annually."

This collection of facts was made in the autumn of 1830. If it were brought down to the present day, it would have to include, in a large variety of memoranda of the same kind, the munificent establishment of the Blind Asylum by a long-tried public benefactor still living, and the institution, announced just before the time when we are writing, of free lectures in departments of science and literature, with an endowment of \$250,000, by a young Bostonian, who made the last arrangements for the execution of his plan in a distant city of Asia, whither he had gone for the purpose of enriching his countrymen with observations of his own mind.

But this, it will be said, is Boston, the chief seat of New England wealth, and a place wrought upon by influences of its own. It is Boston; and what then? Boston is a mere *abstraction* of New England, and a large portion of the men who are there most public-spirited and useful, have brought thither the principles and habits, which make them so, from some interior place of their nativity. Let us see what economy means, and what it comes to, in the country towns. An extract from Mr. Emerson's Centennial Discourse at Concord will serve us for that purpose; we will pledge ourselves to multiply such collections of facts as long as our revilers will have patience to read them.

"In the whole course of the war, the town did not depart from this pledge it had given. Its little population of 1300 souls, behaved like a party to the contest. The number of its troops constantly in service is very great. Its pecuniary burdens are out of all proportion to its capital. The economy so rigid, which marked its earlier history, has all vanished. It spends profusely, affectionately, in the service. 'Since,' say the plaintive records, 'General Washington, at Cambridge, is not able to give but 24s. per cord for wood, for the army; it is voted, that this town encourage the inhabitants to supply the army, by paying two dollars per cord, over and above the General's price, to such as shall carry wood thither;' and 210 cords of wood were carried. A similar order is taken respecting hay. Whilst Boston was occupied by the British troops,

Concord contributed to the relief of the inhabitants £70 in money; 225 bushels of grain; and a quantity of meat and wood. When, presently, the poor of Boston were quartered by the Provincial Congress on the neighbouring country, Concord received 82 persons to its hospitality. In the year 1775, it raised 100 minute men, and 74 soldiers to serve at Cambridge. In March, 1776, 145 men were raised by this town to serve at Dorchester Heights. In June, the General Assembly of Massachusetts resolved to raise 5000 militia, for six months, to reinforce the Continental army. 'The numbers,' say they, 'are large, but this court has the fullest assurance, that their brethren on this occasion, will not confer with flesh and blood, but will, without hesitation, and with the utmost alacrity and despatch, fill up the numbers proportioned to the several towns.' On that occasion, Concord furnished 67 men, paying them itself, at an expense of £622. And so on, with every levy, to the end of the war. For these men, it was continually providing shoes, stockings, shirts, coats, blankets, and beef. The taxes, which, before the war, had not much exceeded £200 per annum, amounted, in the year 1782, to \$9544 in silver. The great expense of the war was borne with cheerfulness, whilst the war lasted; but years passed, after the peace, before the debt was paid. As soon as danger and injury ceased, the people were left at leisure to consider their poverty and their debts. The town records show how slowly the inhabitants recovered from the strain of excessive exertion." — pp. 37–38.

The spirit of the administration of the towns is referred to by the same writer, in a succeeding paragraph. It is the spirit, in New England, — as anybody may know, who will be at pains to inquire, — of whatever may appear to be distinctive in habits of public and private economy; and, if there were more of it in the world, we are sure it would be all the better, both for individual character and the general well-being.

"The tone of the records rises with the dignity of the event. These soiled and musty books are luminous and electric within. The old town-clerks did not spell very correctly, but they contrive to make pretty intelligible the will of a free and just community. Frugal our fathers were, — very frugal, — though, for the most part, they deal generously by their minister, and provide well for the schools and the poor. If at any time, in common with most of our towns, they have carried this economy

to the verge of a vice, it is to be remembered that a town is, in many respects, a financial corporation. They economize, that they may sacrifice. They stint and higgie on the price of a pew, that they may send 200 soldiers to General Washington, to keep Great Britain at bay. For splendor, there must somewhere be rigid economy. That the head of the house may go brave, the members must be plainly clad, and the town must save that the State may spend." — pp. 41, 42.

These allusions to transactions of the revolutionary war, naturally suggest the thought of what is so largely said and sung, respecting the New Englanders being an *unchivalrous* people. Perhaps they are so. We hardly know whether to affirm or deny; for the word *chivalrous*, in its recent use in some parts of the United States, is one of the most vague of Americanisms. We exceedingly desire to see a dictionary, in which the new application of the word shall be authoritatively explained. If to be chivalrous implies a readiness to fatal street broils, most unchivalrous are we, for the halter is our standing remedy for the propensity to assassination, once developed in the act. Nay, our laws (and we feel confident in saying, our juries too, though the case has not yet come up,) make absolutely no difference between a murder after a challenge has been passed, and one gone about without that formality; and our soil is almost literally unstained by blood shed in what has been fancifully called honorable combat. But he who would hazard the assertion, that the New England race is not one of the most adventurous and indomitable courage, has little thought what stiff facts he undertakes to deal with, in their history. The account of the early contests with the natives is crowded with a succession of the most romantic achievements. From the period of the first collision between French and English on this continent, down to the taking of Quebec, the New England colonies were readiest for every sacrifice, and foremost in every danger. The capture of Louisbourg itself, in 1745, is not chiefly an interesting fact because it was the only success obtained by the English arms during a long war, and gave peace to Europe, but because of the extraordinary development of character, in the successful expedition of a few regiments of colonial militia against a distant fortress, one of the strongest of the world both by nature and art. In respect to the extent of the part taken by New England, and especially

by Massachusetts, in the war of the Revolution, Mr. Sprague presents the following statements.

“New England, Massachusetts, then a feeble colony, alone raised the note of defiance against the whole power of the British empire; not on account of any actual oppression practically felt, which alone could have roused the phlegmatic, the sordid, or the selfish; but for a principle,—a doctrine,—for the mere assertion that Parliament had a right to legislate over them. If they had been cold, calculating, and narrow-minded, if they had regarded themselves only, their ease, their safety, or their property, they would have submitted, and left future generations to battle for themselves. But they did not. They knew that the time had come, when they must relinquish their long-cherished visions of hope, their warm and glowing anticipations for their posterity, those free principles of government, which they had labored to establish for all future generations, for all mankind, or they must fight; and, however unequal, however desperate the conflict, they could not hesitate. Their purpose was no ebullition of passion, it was not a solitary gleam of patriotism, which shot up and expired, or a spasm of disinterestedness exhausted by one convulsive effort; but a continued and enduring enthusiasm and spirit of self-sacrifice, which has never been exceeded.

“Exposed as she was on all sides, bordering for hundreds of miles on the territory of the enemy, and for hundreds more of seacoast open to every incursion of his invincible marine, still she did not confine her efforts within herself, but sent her sons wherever blows were to be dealt, or blood to be shed; among the foremost in every battle field, from the northern borders to the confines of Georgia; in every enterprise of danger, in every scene of suffering, whether from the violence of the elements in the untented field, or half clothed, half fed, marching against British veterans, staining the frozen earth at every step with their unshod feet; or driving the western savages from their fastnesses; or traversing the frozen wilds of Maine and Canada in a winter’s march, the most wonderful in history, far exceeding the celebrated retreat of the ten thousand or Hannibal’s crossing the Alps.

“And those, too, who remained at home, scarcely less devoted and suffering, ever laboring in the same great cause, yielding up their property, parting with their last hoof, offering up their last bushel of grain, submitting to privation and want, and yet never faltering or doubting or hesitating in their course, until the work of absolute independence was accomplished. Would

that the records of every town and every association of New England could be inspected by the world. The public archives of the nation can do them but partial justice. By them, however, it is demonstrated that New England, and Massachusetts in particular, throughout the whole war, voluntarily furnished to the general cause contributions of men and money very far beyond her due proportion. As these facts are strikingly exhibited by the official documents, — and I am not aware that a comparative statement has ever been presented to the public, — you will pardon me in this for going a little into detail, which I have not ventured upon any other topic.

“In the first year of the war, 1775, the whole number of Continental troops was 27,443, of which more than one half were from Massachusetts, then embracing the territory which now constitutes the State of Maine; and only 2,475 were from States out of New England.

“In 1776, when a more general organization had been effected, Massachusetts furnished more than all the four Middle States, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware united, — and more than all the five States of Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia united.

“In 1777 commenced a new era. In that and every succeeding year of the war, the quotas to be furnished from each State were prescribed by the Continental Congress. The requisitions upon Massachusetts and Virginia were always equal. But the liberality of the Bay State in complying with them far exceeded that of any other.

“In each of the years 1777, '78, '79, and '80, her contributions nearly equalled the whole of those from the four States of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware; or of the four States south of the Potomac, — Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia.

“In each of the years 1781, '82, and '83, her single contributions very far exceeded the aggregate of those of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware, as also the aggregate of those of Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia.

“If we combine all these years, and take the aggregates of the whole war, from 1775 to 1783 inclusive, it will be found that Massachusetts furnished more troops for the Continental service than all the Middle States just mentioned, and more than all the five States of Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia; and that, of the whole aggregate number from all the thirteen States, more than a fourth, approaching to indeed to one third, were from this Commonwealth alone!

“In pecuniary supplies, the contrast is scarcely less striking.

This Commonwealth not only contributed more than any other State, but the excess of her payments into the general treasury, over what she drew from it, far exceeded that of any other. Indeed, the balance in her favor was not only greater than that of all the four Middle States before mentioned, or of all the four States south of the Potomac, with Maryland in addition, but exceeded that of all the other twelve united. Of the whole excess, more than half was from Massachusetts alone !

“ During the whole war of the revolution, her preëminence was never questioned, — then, in the day of trial and of terror, when the storm lowered and darkness covered our whole horizon, the first rank was freely conceded to her.” — pp. 19 – 22.

This extract brings into view another of the current charges against the New England population, — that of their *coldness*. For a cold people, they have unquestionably been apt to kindle in past time rather easily ; and that too sometimes at nothing more heating, than the prospect of some distant or abstract good or evil. Cautious and reserved, perhaps it may be truly said they are ; and these are qualities of manner, which, however objectionable in point of gracefulness and power of conciliating, are often found connected with qualities of character, of the substantial class of self-respect and love of consistency. But it can hardly be among a merely unfeeling, phlegmatic people, that so many of the great benevolent enterprises of the day have had their origin. With the wisdom of those enterprises, all or any, we have nothing now to do. But it is scarcely to be denied that they are enterprises of an adventurous and comprehensive sort, indicating something of a sanguine temperament on the part of their projectors ; and the more indeed any of them can be shown to be of a visionary character, the less do they agree with the theory of their having proceeded from a people merely calculating and frigid.

The truth is, there are certain traits, prominent in the New England character, such as love of order and the habit of self-control, which hasty observers mistake for tokens of a want of earnestness. Was there ever a more sublime rage than the people within a day's march of Boston were in, on the 19th of April, 1775 ? yet we lately heard an eminent South-western statesman amusing himself with the fact of their going to work, the day after, giving and taking depositions respecting the circumstances of the affray. Why not ? What

did this show, but their love of right, order, and law, not suspended by the sanguinary work of a revolution? They had fought for a cause, and they wished to make that good cause appear. They were not a riotous people, ready to go to blows with or without reason. They owed it to their respect for themselves and others, to show that they had not unnecessarily shed blood, at the free rate they did. It was no repenting of the conflict, or shrinking from its consequences or its prosecution; for at the moment these depositions were taking, the country was pouring down its regiments of minute-men, under such epauletted justices of the peace, as could be spared, to seal up the invader hermetically within Boston neck. — Bunker Hill fight was a thing gone about with great deliberation and arrangement; but never before had militiamen done such desperate service. Nor let any of the gentlemen whom we have quoted suppose that when we refer to the valor and constancy which have made that day immortal, we are but imposing on them a Yankee version of General Jackson's exploit at New Orleans forty years later, with his Tennesseans. If they doubt, we shall show them Southern authorities for the truth of the statement; and if they will ever wander into that polar and barbarous region of the Atlantic coast, which lies about 42° of north latitude, their eyes shall behold the very spot, where the thing we are telling of was done.

But respecting this attributed coldness in the New England character, we should do injustice to our readers to speak in any other than Mr. Sprague's words. With one more quotation from his eloquent address, we dismiss the subject, for the present. There are other connected topics on which we intended to touch; but our remarks have already extended themselves to an entirely unexpected length, and we have more than exhausted our space.

"*Enthusiasm* was the characteristic of our fathers; they transmitted it to their posterity, and, startling as the proposition may seem, it has ever been the *basis* of the New England character; — not indeed exhibited externally, and rarely open to superficial observation.

"The Puritans, before they left their native country, were surrounded on all sides by enemies, and subjected to violence and oppression from the arm of government, to which they opposed only caution, circumspection, and a fixed immovable

resolution, necessarily begetting much of sternness and severity in their external demeanour. Ever calm and self-controlled, they adopted a rigid system of education for their children, by which outward manifestations of internal emotion were forbidden and repressed. But the fire which was not permitted to break forth, only glowed with the more enduring intensity within, the fountain of that restless energy of character which, whatever the object of pursuit, impels them forward with a boldness and activity equalled by no other people on earth. This is the great moral power which, however directed, is sure to produce the most striking results. From obvious causes, it has generally been directed to some branch of productive industry. Their poverty, their barren soil and ungenial climate, their laws of equal distribution of estates allowing no entailments or continued accumulations for posterity, have necessarily, in time of peace, thrown almost every New England man upon some gainful pursuit. He enters upon it with all his characteristic energy and perseverance; and hence the opinion that he is peculiarly sordid and avaricious. Others see only a thirst for gain, in what, in truth, is but one developement of his constitutional enthusiasm. He is seen calm, cool, self-subdued, with no apparent ardor of temperament, with no pressing physical wants, impelled not by the approach of starvation like the over-crowded population of other countries, yet going forward with an activity and inflexibility of purpose which outstrip all competition. He is seen upon the ocean, meeting the world on a fair field of equal competition, traversing every sea, penetrating every coast, daring every climate, everywhere producing greater results with less means than any competitor; and whatever his object, whether it be drawing its treasures from the bosom of the deep, or pressing with gainful commerce its heaving surface, pursuing it with a bolder spirit, grasping with a stronger hand, striking with a more unerring aim, and spreading his sails for a more daring flight. The same phenomenon is seen on land; whether it be as a hunter beyond the Rocky Mountains, or a pioneer in felling the forest, and subduing the soil, or in building up cities and constructing rail-roads, still there is the same untiring devotion of all his time and all his faculties.

“But those who think that gain alone is the governing and impelling motive, if they will but extend their observation, will see the same intensity in every other pursuit, although neither gold nor gain can be hoped. In war with the aborigines, where no spoils were to be won, they obtained a superiority, not merely from civilized arts, but in those qualities which civilization is supposed to enfeeble, and for which the savage is most

distinguished. They made themselves more active in the race, more sagacious in the council, more watchful in the ambush, and more untiring in the pursuit. In civilized warfare, too, the same characteristics have been displayed, whether with Paul Jones, and Isaac Hull, and Samuel Tucker, and David Porter, on the ocean, or at Louisbourg, or Bunker Hill, or Quebec, or Niagara. In the paths of Christian benevolence, what missionaries have exhibited a more fearless and devoted spirit, whether among the North American Indians, or at Indostan, or the Sandwich Islands, or at Sumatra, faithful even unto death?

"The effects of this pervading zeal and ardor and energy are seen everywhere. It is this which has studded our iron-bound coast with cities and villages, and clothed our barren fields with verdure,—which has subdued the forest and spread far and wide the beams and the blessings of civilization. Other parts of our country have been peopled originally from other portions of Europe; but go where you will, the effects of New England enterprise and skill and labor are seen and felt. In every State of the Union, you will find that they have taken the lead in energy and activity, and wherever there have been the greatest advances, there you may be sure to find the sons of New England. The Puritan blood flows everywhere, swelling every vein of this great republic, diluted perhaps by intermixture, enfeebled perhaps, but still imparting something of its pristine strength and ardor."—pp. 9–11.

ART. XIII. — CRITICAL NOTICES.

1. — *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society. Vol. V. of the Third Series.* 8vo. pp. 300. Boston; Russell, Shattuck, & Co. 1836.

WE are glad to find that this highly respectable Society continues to add volume after volume to our stores of historical information, and is as vigorously productive in its old age, as it was at its formation, nearly fifty years ago. It is among the oldest of our literary and philosophical societies, and we know of none that has published so much, either in amount or value, or whose transactions reflect more credit on the intellectual character of the country. Twenty-five octavo volumes, relating to American history and antiquities, make a large and substantial contribution to our literary treasures.

At the time of the Society's institution, in 1791, the plan